

Psychoeducational Assessment

How to Prepare your Child for the Assessment

Preparing your child in advance for the psychoeducational assessment can reduce your child's anxiety and encourage their cooperation in the assessment process.

For elementary school-age children, it is advised that you inform them a few days to a week in advance that they have an appointment scheduled with us. This will give your child time to process the information and ask any questions that may come to mind. Older children can be told further in advance. Remind your child the day before the appointment that they will be spending time with us the next day, usually instead of going to school. Missing school can be a major sales point!

In describing us and what we do it is advised that you try to avoid using emotionally-laden terms such as "testing," "doctor," "learning disabilities," and "giftedness" with your child. For example, rather than saying "You are going to a doctor to be tested for learning disabilities," or "You are going to a doctor to see how smart you are," you could explain that you made an appointment with someone who will help you and them understand "how their brain learns easily and where it has a bit more trouble" which will allow you to help make school and learning easier and more fun for them. You can explain that the work they do with us will involve a variety of things, such as answering questions, doing puzzles, drawing, listening to stories, and playing games. We'll take breaks and there are stickers and toys involved. Emphasize that most children really enjoy the experience and are eager to come back. Most importantly, make an effort to convey a positive and confident attitude about the experience.

Make every effort to ensure that your child gets a good night's sleep before the assessment and eats a healthy breakfast in the morning. Bring everything that your child normally needs, such as glasses or an inhaler for allergies. Pack snacks and a drink for refueling during rest breaks. Pack lunch as well if we are schedule to work through that meal. We often start at 9:30 and have a "working lunch" with the child which gives us a chance to chat and get to know them better. Some children may wish to bring a "blankie" for comfort or a favorite toy or book to show us. We have had children do card tricks, show us their art work, and explain to us (in great detail) what they love about Minecraft. We do not do the testing with the parents in the room, as we find the dynamic is better if we can establish an independent relationship with the child. You are welcome to drop your child off with us and return at the designated time, or, if your child or you prefer to stay nearby, we have a comfortable area for you to sit and read or work (Wi-Fi available).

The psychologist performing the assessment has been trained in working with children with a history of academic, social, emotional, and behavioral difficulties. She loves children, and treats every child with respect and empathy, developing a warm bond with

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each one. It is our highest priority to make the process comfortable and enjoyable for your child. It is likely that when you come to pick up your child they will greet you be bursting with enthusiasm, eager to tell you how well they did and how much fun they had.

Unfortunately we will not be able to give you feedback immediately after the first meeting as we will not yet have had an opportunity to score the tests or reflect on the meaning of the patterns of performance. Also, we prefer to avoid discussing your child in front of him/her. Please be patient and allow us to go through our process – we promise we will share details and give you every opportunity to understand your child as soon as possible.